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Item 10
Outcome of the Conference

Note verbale dated 27 June 2012 from the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

The Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations has the honour to submit the "Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development" (see annex), endorsed by the Governments of Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

The Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to circulate this Declaration as a document of the Conference.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 27 June 2012 from the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

Statement by the Governments of Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay:

Twenty years after the Earth Summit, we reiterate that, as recognized in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens. To this end, each individual should have appropriate access to information, the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes and effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings. We thus affirm that to comply with this Principle, States should facilitate and promote education, awareness-raising and public participation by making information widely available and providing effective access to the proceedings outlined above.

We also recognize and affirm that the rights of access to information, participation and justice regarding environmental issues are essential for promoting sustainable development, democracy and a healthy environment. These rights provide many benefits, such as helping to make better decisions and implement them more effectively; involving the public in environmental issues; furthering accountability and transparency in governance; and helping to change production and consumption patterns.

We consider it important to emphasize that, in keeping with our commitment to Principle 10, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have invested substantial financial and human resources in its implementation. As a result, we have made considerable progress in the legal recognition of the rights of access to information, participation and justice regarding environmental issues through substantive dialogue with civil society and intergovernmental institutions.

Despite our efforts and progress, however, we recognize the need for agreements to ensure the full exercise of rights of access. We are aware that the environmental challenges we face on a national, regional and global level require far more concerted, proactive and effective action from the international community and organizations. We are thus willing to explore in detail various ways to enhance the exercise of those rights with the active involvement of the key stakeholders and society as a whole.

Therefore, bearing in mind that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development calls for firm political will to enable us to face existing and emerging challenges, we declare that:

Commitments must be made to ensure the full exercise of rights of access to information, participation and justice regarding environmental issues as enshrined in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration of 1992. To this end, we declare our willingness to launch a process to explore the feasibility of adopting a regional instrument, ranging from guidelines, workshops and best practices to a regional convention open to all countries in the region and with the meaningful participation of all

concerned citizens. Latin America and the Caribbean can and must take a meaningful step forward on this front.

The above-mentioned Governments therefore commit to drafting and implementing a Plan of Action 2012-2014, with the support of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) as the technical secretariat, to work towards such a regional convention or other instrument. As input for that plan, our Governments hereby request ECLAC to conduct a study of the situation, best practices and requirements concerning access to information, participation and justice regarding environmental issues in Latin America and the Caribbean.